

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT

## THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library Association)



EDITED BY T. E. CALLANDER  
FULHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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No. 388. OCTOBER 1931

## Editorial

THE Inaugural Meeting of the 37th Session of the Association of Assistant Librarians will be held on Wednesday, 14th October, at 7 p.m., at the London School of Economics, Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2. The Chair will be taken by the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. The speaker will be Mr. Walter de la Mare, and his subject, "Lewis Carroll and Nonsense."

Mr. B. M. Headicar, the Librarian, has kindly offered to conduct members over the School, and particularly over the very fine library therein. Will those members wishing to avail themselves of his offer please meet in the Entrance Hall of the School at 6.15 p.m.

As we know that very adequate arrangements were made by Mr. Arundell Esdaile for reporting in full in the *Library Association Record* the proceedings of the Cheltenham Conference, we have not thought it necessary to include in this issue anything more than a brief account of them. We would urge upon the laggards the fact that several valuable papers read at the Conference will be appearing in the *Record* should be one more reason for taking up full membership of the Library Association and securing its publications.

The perilous task of piloting "Valuations" through the seas of criticism has been nobly undertaken by Mr. Frank M. Gardner, of Leeds. We trust that he will prove an acceptable sacrifice.

It may not be generally known that for some time THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT has led a rather hand-to-mouth existence. The Hon. Editor has all too often found himself in the position of being able to secure sufficient articles for the forthcoming number, and having to trust to Providence to inspire a contributor to the next. So far, his luck has held, but it is not in the best interest of the journal that the selection of articles for publication should be so greatly conditioned by necessity. It seems reasonable to suppose that among 1,700 members there should be at least a few score who have ideas. We appeal to them to put their ideas on paper.

The scope of THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT is wide, but it may be of some assistance to literary aspirants to indicate some of the things that definitely are not wanted. Among these are free verse, first impressions of examination rooms, paraphrases of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* articles on the various processes of graphic reproduction, and descriptions of the alleged humours of work in lending libraries. The Editor has a large stock of these awaiting publication (indefinitely).

At the last meeting of the Council, an interesting suggestion was received from Mr. E. Male, of Brighton. He pointed out that every meeting of the A.A.L. brought together many members who are not personally known to each other. He therefore suggested that the Association should adopt a badge which, engraved with the name of its owner, might be worn at all functions. With his letter he enclosed a suitable design for such a badge. The Council welcomed this useful proposal, and ask members of the A.A.L. to say if they are prepared to support this venture.

The proposed badge, of silver and blue enamel, is about the size of a shilling, and bears an open book surmounted by a torch of knowledge. It is inscribed "Association of Assistant Librarians," and has a scroll upon which the name of the owner may be engraved. The badge would be fitted with either brooch or stud attachment, and, suitably engraved, would cost about two shillings.

Will all who would welcome the adoption of this means of identification please send their names, on post cards endorsed **BADGE**, to the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible.

It is with great regret that we record the untimely death, while attending the Cheltenham Conference, of Mr. G. L. Denne, F.L.A., Librarian of Ilford. As was generally reported in the London press, Mr. Denne appeared to those who saw him at Cheltenham to be in the best of health, and the tragic suddenness of his death seemed accentuated by the fact that it occurred at a time when he was surrounded by his fellow-librarians.

Although this sad occurrence naturally cast a shadow over the later days of the Conference, we feel impelled to express our sincere admiration of the action of Mrs. Denne, who insisted that no public announcement of her bereavement should be made to the delegates.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on 21st October at the National Library for the Blind.

## LIBRARY ASSOCIATION EXAMINATIONS: DECEMBER, 1931

The dates fixed for the next Examinations are as follows:

Monday, 7th December, 1931 .	. Section 3, Classification.
Tuesday, 8th December, 1931 .	. Section 4, Cataloguing.
Wednesday, 9th December, 1931	. Section 5, Library Organization.
Thursday, 10th December, 1931	. Section 6, Library Routine.
Thursday, 10th December, 1931	. Language Examinations.

Friday, 11th December, 1931 .	Section 1, English Literary History.
Saturday, 12th December, 1931 .	Section 2, Bibliography, including either (a) Book Selection, or (b) Palæography and the Archive Sciences.

*All entries for the Examinations must be made upon the official form, and sent to the office of the Library Association, 26-27 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, before 31st October, 1931, after which date no further applications will be entertained.*

### SECTION 3. CLASSIFICATION

CANDIDATES FOR THE ABOVE EXAMINATION WILL BE ASKED TO REPORT TO THEIR PARTICULAR EXAMINATION CENTRE WHETHER THEY CAN PROVIDE THEIR OWN COPY OF DEWEY'S *Decimal Classification*, SUCH COPY NOT TO BE EARLIER THAN THE 11TH EDITION.



## In Conference Assembled

**P**ARTURIENT MONTES had an unfortunate and ludicrous sequel. *Parturient bibliothecarii* is another matter. Although the Cotswolds did not hop like young rams in sympathy with our labours, there was surely nothing of the mouse in the results of the Cheltenham Conference. It is not for me to enumerate the great achievements of the annual assembly—that is the function of the official proceedings and of the *Library Association Record*. I can only record my impressions, and leave my readers to register suitable emotion.

On Monday, 31st August, we began with hors d'œuvres. The Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D., addressed the first session on the subject of HOSPITAL LIBRARIES: A BOOK SERVICE FOR PATIENTS. The Dean prefaced his remarks with a bland admission that he knew nothing of hospital libraries, and did not know why he had been asked to speak. Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter, K.B.E., in opening the discussion, impressed upon the meeting that the two essentials to a successful hospital library service are a librarian and a suitable room in which to house the library. It seemed to me that he was more in sympathy with such libraries, because they provided a useful parking-place for those patients who can leave their beds, than because they have any definite function as an aid to healing. However, there was a useful discussion, to

which librarians who really knew something of the subject made constructive contributions, and we got a good press next morning.

The PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS is available in full in the *Record*, and I do not propose to report it here, and would only remark that it seemed to me outstanding in its masterly survey of real achievement since the war, and in its strong plea, on sound and unsentimental grounds, for adequate financial recognition of our work. At this session, the Conference was formally welcomed by the Mayor of Cheltenham, and we were greeted by an ode of welcome specially composed for the occasion by "Gloucestershire Lad," who, in my opinion, has something to learn from his brother over the border.

In the evening of the same day (Tuesday) Mr. L. Stanley Jast opened a discussion on BRANCH LIBRARY POLICY. Mr. Jast has a prodigiously fertile brain, and threw us brilliant ideas on his subject as though they were mere bagatelles that had occurred to him over tea. I am afraid that the pearls which he cast before us were not really appreciated. This mainly because he upset the local pride of one or two chairmen, and because, to the fluently expressed horror of several other city fathers, he dared to suggest that when a library ceased to be an efficient and economic proposition it should forthwith be razed to the ground. This blasphemy, that profane hands should be laid upon public property when it will stand unaided for another hundred years, was piously refuted.

On Wednesday, Mr. F. E. Sandry addressed a meeting which had been arranged for the benefit of the A.A.L. Section. Taking as his subject THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, Mr. Sandry gave a most lucid account of the changes of policy which are embodied in the newly issued syllabus of the L.A. Most unfortunately, the limited time available for the discussion of his remarks was almost entirely monopolized by senior members of the section, and by a certain Mr. Robbins, of Oldbury, in whose bonnet there buzzed vigorously the most remarkable bees. Although this gentleman spoke eloquently, and would not be suppressed, his speech was so fatuous as to break even conference records. His chief obsession, one gathered, was that the L.A. should be induced to grant free diplomas to those unfortunates to whom Nature has denied the intelligence needed for the passing of examinations. Mr. Sandry spoke only from notes, but I hope that he may be persuaded to put the substance of his speech into writing, for publication in these pages.

The GARDEN-PARTY was most enjoyable, although for me it was spoiled by the fact that I was unable to meet the genius who was responsible for the introduction to this function of a team of most comely and efficient young ladies, who gave us an all too brief cabaret show. I am all for such delights, particularly at conferences, but I cannot help wondering where I should be now had it been *my* suggestion.

In writing of the public meeting held on Wednesday evening, for once

I feel entirely free from any desire to be flippant. Sir John Reith, in his speech on B.B.C. LISTENING GROUPS, was truly inspiring. Although speaking as the head and mainspring of one of the greatest cultural forces that the world has yet seen, Sir John showed plainly that there was no hint of patronage in his attitude to the library movement. Instead, he made it clear that he regarded librarians as equal and vital collaborators in the work of the B.B.C. Listening to the obviously sincere appreciation of a man of this calibre, one felt genuinely proud of one's calling. Sir John was followed by the Rev. Canon J. O. Hannay, M.A., who lectured on the DUTIES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN CONNECTION WITH RECREATIONAL READING. Although the substance of his talk was slight, and his conception of our duties not entirely fresh, to hear Canon Hannay was pure delight. It is not often that we hear expressed at a public meeting such profound feeling for the incidental beauties of language and literature.

For an adequate description of the ANNUAL MEETING, the services of an experienced war correspondent are needed. My pen is inadequate to describe the skirmishing. In rapid succession we had a passage of arms between Messrs. Jast and Esdaile (this being part of an acrimonious discussion of the paragraph of the annual report mentioning the part played by the L.A. in the Scottish National Library dispute); a rather painful and very tactless and unnecessary allusion to the resignation of the Secretary; a protracted repeat performance by the egregious Mr. Robbins; and some scathing criticisms of everything in general from Councillor W. H. Smith of Leicester. However, as Mr. Taplow says, "everything pass off primb."

Of the ANNUAL DINNER I cannot say much. It may be that my normally acute perceptions were temporarily blurred by the excellent food, but it did not seem to me that, with the single exception of Mr. Jast, the speakers were in very scintillating vein. I must record, though, the striking tribute paid by Sir Fabian Ware, K.C.V.O., to the P.B.I. (*anglicé* library assistants).

It is by now axiomatic that the Library Association must not be criticized in its official journals. And, concerning the Cheltenham Conference, I have no criticisms to make. I leave that to the Greeks. But I offer one humble suggestion. It is that, when we meet at Bournemouth, an entire session, lasting for at least twelve hours, should be arranged for chairmen of committees. Cheltenham did not gain by the fact that many of the sessions were made a stamping-ground for these enthusiastic but sometimes slightly informed gentlemen, to the exclusion of librarians, many of whom had little opportunity to contribute to discussions. I also suggest that at the end of this special session, the L.A. should hire me to disguise myself as a representative of the Press Association, in order that misguided seekers after cheap notoriety might unburden themselves to me without any untoward publicity resulting from their well-meant criticisms.

T. E. C.

## Valuations

By FRANK M. GARDNER

WHATEVER be the truth of the proverb, it is more for the comfort of my readers than the ease of my soul that I confess I have never been a critic before.

Not, at least, avowedly. Criticized I have, and lustily, ever since it occurred to me, when a mere child in library experience, that the niceties of punctuation and alphabetization in a catalogue entry were not of such breath-taking importance as my superiors imagined.

As I grew older, I criticized the more; after the first crack in the armour of perfection came the discovery of gaping joints and rusty headpieces. What I dare not say I thought; though there were some things one dare not even think.

So that the prospect of using the lash publicly was very attractive. In practice it is rather frightening. It is one thing to smash images in a light-hearted essay. It is quite another gravely to measure and appraise to the tune of a regular and consistent two thousand words. One changes one's mind so often. . . .

And yet, I suppose, all critics must make a start somewhere, as the barber must perform his first shave, and the airman his first solo flight. It is a craft that cannot be practised in secret. Not even (if one accepts the riposte!) under a pseudonym, that resort of the timid iconoclast.

This is no apologia. Even though I may never have been a critic before, I have the three great qualities of success.

I am young. My brain has not flowed into the channels of routine in which the public official is predestined to float.

I am interested in the things of which I write. I am a fanatical devotee to the advancement of my profession. When and if frenetic chief librarians demand my head on a charger, I shall be able to plead with perfect sincerity, "All zeal, Mr. Easy, all zeal!"

And lastly, I am prejudiced. An important qualification that. All great critics are prejudiced. Johnson, Hazlitt, Arnold, and that modern super-critic Mencken, who thumbs his nose at Columbia regularly once a week—they all have their foibles. Let me say now what my chief prejudices are.

I am prejudiced against most printed publicity, because I consider it misdirected, or rather undirected, and especially against bloated and unwieldy lists, which I abhor. I like good printing and modern types, because modern typography expresses that spirit of movement which is behind modern culture. I believe that the chief aim of the public library should be public service, and that the public which pays the piper should have a right to call the tune, though with some reservations. My greatest prejudice of all,

which I will pursue violently and unfalteringly, is against that vague idealism, product of woolly and inefficient minds, that so permeates British Librarianship. Educate? Certainly. Influence reading? If we can. But remember that we are dealing with men, not geese. We are creating citizens, not *pâté de foie gras*.

And now lead me to those lions.

*Progressions and retrogressions: Some annual reports*

Barking, Bermondsey, Bootle, Chesterfield, Fulham, Hyde, Kingston,  
Norwich, Richmond

There is something about an annual report which arouses all the latent Sadism in my nature. There is such an acutely depressing sameness about it; such a smug statement of the obvious, eternally and infinitely repeated year after year, generation after generation. The cover was usually designed (it is to prostitute the word, but no matter) fifty years ago. The contents are as static as the cover.

One always knows what to expect. On the first page the Librarian will pat himself on the back for an increase of issues, or, if by some mischance he cannot exhibit an increase, he will remind his Committee that quality is more important than quantity, and point with pride to his non-fiction percentage.

Then will follow a hurried capitulation of activities, ending with the inevitable, "The Staff have, without exception, given every satisfaction during a difficult and arduous year."

One would almost welcome a report that began "We regret to report that, not only are the inhabitants of Puddleton almost without interest in reading, but their reading activities are entirely confined to fiction of the lowest grade. The ridiculous policy of the committee in"—and ending with, "The Staff have given no satisfaction whatsoever, their chief occupations appearing to be clock-watching and flirting with the borrowers."

While regretfully recognizing the impossibility of such a flight of fancy being translated into fact, one seeks vainly for reasons why the average annual report should be so agonizingly dull. Perhaps because it is mainly intended for the committee, and committees notoriously resent innovation. But if that is the case, why go to the trouble of printing the thing?

And in any case, the annual report should not be written mainly for the committee. The annual report is an important document. It is a record of the state of culture in the particular town which publishes it. It might be a unique advertisement of the library service, both in the town and outside it. It should be more than an index to the past: it should be a beacon for the future.

The chief fault is, of course, one of format. Of the reports I have before me, only Bermondsey and Norwich show any pretensions to coherent design



in make-up. Even you, Bermondsey! Why spoil an attractive cover by setting the title in Plantin Old Style? Future, Gill Sans, or even Broadway would have given a touch of distinction which has now been lost.

The others have apparently exercised little or no restraint on the local printer.

Hyde, which, though a small place, evidently has a desire to count, spoils an attractively printed report with an undistinguished cover, and uses, for some mysterious reason, calendered paper.

Barking has a hideous cover, and sets its tale of progress in an almost unreadable type. A pity, because Barking has a lot to be proud of.

Fulham, Chesterfield and Kingston are not bad, but then, they are not very good. Kingston, by the way, seems to have rather a lot of borrowers in proportion to its issues: 7,000 people should borrow more than 125,000 books a year. One cannot help wondering whether all that numerous contingent are still in the fold, or whether some of them have wandered.

But format is not the only consideration. The annual report too often errs also in style and in its method of presentation of its facts.

There is a peculiar "breathless" style about most reports. As though the Librarian had primed himself with a load of information and was in a desperate hurry to get it down before he forgot it. Or as if he had just a couple of hours to spare before dinner. This peculiarity is common to all, or nearly all reports, but the prize must be reserved for Richmond, whose report reminded me irresistibly of *Tit-bits*. As a method of presenting a number of gobbets of information concisely and economically, numeration doubtless has much to commend it, but it makes connected reading a trifle difficult.

Statistics, too, can be presented neatly and clearly, and they can be presented otherwise. As examples of the otherwise method one may select Norwich and Bootle. Bootle one can forgive, because Bootle has no written report to supplement its statistics, but Norwich is in different case. Norwich aims to tell the world. It is a pity she talks a language we do not understand.

Against Norwich's written report I have no complaint. It is an adequate survey, rather overfull, perhaps (the list of donors, for instance, is a rather superfluous courtesy), but well put together. But the statistics! Now I have no head for figures: I always have to think twice when multiplying eight by seven and nine by six; but even a senior wrangler would find it difficult to disentangle the statistical record of the year's work at Norwich. Four pages are devoted to issue analysis. It is left to the reader to synthesize. . . . Before one can ascertain the relation between the issue of fiction and non-fiction, one has to add up three separate issues, and then do a percentage sum. I was curious to see what dark secret was hidden in this labyrinth of figures, but soon gave it up, and turned over the page, to come on what appeared to me to be a section from the City Treasurer's account book.

Not being a chartered accountant, I soon abandoned any attempt to understand it.

Nowhere could I find those essential statistics which are essential for purposes of estimate and comparison—population? One presumes either that the population of Norwich is universally known or that everyone possesses a gazetteer. Rate in £? Apparently it has never been worked out. Cost per inhabitant? Perhaps it is not desirable that Norwich should know.

Richmond and Fulham can tell us all their essential statistics in three pages. Norwich tells us less in nine.

I am glad to notice that all the reports under review feature increased issues. I am not so glad to notice that there seems to be an increase of the tendency to obliterate betting news in newspapers.

There is a distinct connection between the two phenomena, though it may seem a trifle subtle. The unemployed who read Edgar Wallace in the lending library also read his views on racing in the newsroom. And surely they are harassed enough without being subjected to the irritation of petty Bumbledom? There is no saying where this kind of thing, once started, will end. The authority that obliterates betting news might easily remove light fiction from the lending library, on the grounds of undue congestion and the hampering of really important borrowers.

About the state of the law on the defacing of public property I am not sure. But I think Mr. Albert Haddock would find it worth his while to look into the matter.

#### *Brooklyn and Boston : Two American bulletins*

The two have some alliterative connection, but otherwise are as far apart as Mr. Walpole and Mr. Osbert Sitwell. Brooklyn's bulletin has no pretensions beyond being a mere list of additions, and is as badly produced as any English library's worst effort. The list, however, is long and interesting. It is rather difficult to criticize American book-selection, since one can never be sure how far publication dates correspond, but it seems that some books, notably Shaw's *Apple-Cart* and the "Studio" edition of Baudelaire's essay on Guys, have made rather a tarty appearance on Brooklyn's shelves. Titles, too, are sometimes puzzling. It is rather a shock to see the *Andree diaries* appearing as *Andree's story*, and it is several minutes before one can identify Thomas Burke's *A Teashop in Limehouse* with *The Pleasantries of old Quong*.

I know nothing about Boston except what I learnt from Upton Sinclair's novel on the Sacco-Vanzetti case, and the Boston bulletin gives me a new respect for that city. Its decorous sage-green cover gives a promise of its contents. One notices a long article on eighteenth-century tracts with respect; one glances at a review of ten books, including Towney's *Equality* and Johnson's *Jane Austen*, with awe; and one fetches up against the long

list of additions in a state of prostration. If this is an index to Boston's reading, I thought, then truly can Boston lay claim to be the most cultured city in the United States. Impelled by curiosity to know more about Boston, I looked up statistics. One hundred and fifty thousand people out of a population of three-quarters of a million are borrowers. Perhaps the odd 600,000 are not really Boston. But how learned, how full of wisdom must be those 150,000.

*National Central Library : Fifteenth annual report, 1930-31*

I dipped deeply into this report. Its sober pages tell a thrilling story of a year's progress.

That the progress is slow; that the library should be shockingly hampered by lack of funds; that the book fund depends almost entirely on the generosity of the Carnegie trustees, only makes the story all the more exciting, for the great wonder is, not that there is so little money available, but that so much can be done for so little.

Subscriptions from libraries total £1,472. It is hardly necessary to state that this is not enough. Taking all things into consideration, knowing that most of the larger libraries are outliers, lend more books than they borrow, and pay postage on those they do borrow, it seems feasible that towns as important as Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool could afford to increase their subscriptions.

Most of these towns are, as I say, outliers, and are very generous with loans, but the outlier system is largely a makeshift, causing long and irritating delays in the supply of books.

What is needed is a large central pool of books, and this can only be obtained by increased subscriptions.

But perhaps one should not carp. Knowing the state of the co-operative spirit in our profession, I am always rather surprised at the mere existence of a National Central Library.

*Croydon—The Norbury Library : An illustrated description*

The camera is a great deceiver, and I hesitate to judge the Norbury Library until I have seen it. But from the photographs which adorn this sumptuous souvenir, I am not impressed.

Architecturally it is modern—up to a point. Technically it is modern—up to a point. In comparison with the branch library of four or five years ago, it marks a definite advance. But in comparison with, for example, the recently opened Firth Park in Sheffield and Hunslet in Leeds, with which it is comparable in point of cost, it just fails to be distinguished.

I admire Mr. Sayer's attempt to cope with the newsroom problem, but the provision of a room solely to house seventeen penny newspapers

smacks of the absurd. The disposition of the slopes makes the room look bare, and the vegetation in the centre only accentuates its ugliness.

And how are periodical readers going to fare when the main library is inundated with the evening rush of borrowers?



## The Divisions North-Western Division

### LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

ON the afternoon of Friday, 31st July, 35 members of this Branch visited Speke Hall, the home of the Norris family, and afterwards returned to the Blue Bird Café in town for tea.

It was not anticipated, in view of the holiday season, that the response would be as great as it was, so that the number had to be limited, and several members were unavoidably disappointed. I take this opportunity of apologising to these members. This was the first outdoor meeting for several years, and there was consequently no precedent on which to base an estimate.

The Council is grateful to Mr. Parry, Chief Librarian of Liverpool, who was present, and Mr. Smith, Deputy-Chief, for their valuable co-operation and assistance in making the meeting such a success.

W. HAUGH,  
*Hon. Secretary.*



## South-Eastern Division

### REPORT PRESENTED AT THE FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION HELD AT DITCHLING ON WEDNESDAY, 1ST JULY, 1931

The Committee has pleasure in submitting the Fourth Annual Report on the work of the Division.

*Membership.*—The total membership is 50. Of this number, 31 are full members of the Library Association. During the year 2 members have resigned.

*Meetings.*—The following meetings have been held:

2nd July, 1930.      Lewes Annual Meeting.

21st Jan., 1931.

Hove Public Library.

*Chairman*: Mr. J. W. Lister, Chief Librarian, Hove.*Papers*: "Post-war English novel."

Covering paper, Miss E. Gerard, A.L.A.

Social novel, Miss E. M. Clarke, Hastings.

Detective and crime novelists, C. P. Willard, Lewes.

Women novelists, C. L. Quinton, F.L.A., Chichester.

War novel, E. Male, F.L.A., Brighton.

Historical novelists, Miss C. E. Rice, Hove.

Humorous novels, Miss M. Reading, Eastbourne.

15th April, 1931.

Brighton Public Library.

*Chairman*: Mr. E. Male, F.L.A., Sub-Librarian, Brighton.*Paper*: "Some modern private printing presses," by Mr. A. Webb, F.L.A., Brighton.

No Autumn Meeting was held, members attending instead the Inaugural Meeting held in London in October. The attendances at all these meetings have been exceptionally good, and in connection with them there have been various social features which have been very much enjoyed.

*Officers*.—At the last Annual Meeting, Mr. A. Webb, F.L.A., was re-elected to the office of President, and Miss G. Dean and Mr. E. Male, F.L.A., to those of Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. Miss E. Young, A.L.A., was elected Hon. Auditor. The Committee, consisting of one member from each library in the area, were elected as follows: Miss E. M. Clarke (Hastings), Miss E. Gerard (Worthing), Mr. M. Peirce (Chichester), Miss E. M. Talmey (Hove), Miss M. Watson, A.L.A. (Brighton) and Mr. C. P. Willard (Lewes).

*Finances*.—The finances of the Division are in a satisfactory condition, as shown by appended statement of receipts and expenditure. The Hon. Treasurer reports a balance in hand of £6 os. 8d.

Miss E. Gerard has been re-elected as the Divisional Representative, and Mr. A. Webb, F.L.A., as a non-London representative to serve on the General Council of the Association of Assistant Librarians. The Committee are also pleased to announce that Miss E. Gerard was last year elected to the Council of the Library Association. Mr. Webb continues to represent the A.A.L. on the membership committee of the Library Association.

The Hon. Secretary, Miss G. Dean, attended the Annual Meeting at Bath as the official delegate of the Division.

Of the year's work there is little that calls for special comment; steady progress has been made, and the papers read have reached a high standard.

Thanks are tendered to the Authorities of the Libraries where meetings have been held, to all those who have helped to make the session interesting, profitable and enjoyable, and to Mr. J. W. Lister, Mr. H. D. Roberts, M.B.E., F.L.A., and Mr. H. Wilson, M.C., F.L.A., for very kind hospitality.

## South Wales and Monmouth Division

Before this report appears in the *ASSISTANT* the first meeting of the Division will have been held. There are, however, several notes of interest to members.

The programme for the winter session until Christmas will be approximately as follows:

October at Penarth, when we hope to have a paper read to us by Miss Williams, B.A., County Librarian, Glamorgan; November at Pontypridd, with a verbal battle similar to that at Newport last March; and December, the Annual General Meeting and Christmas Party at Cardiff.

The Divisional Committee have decided to offer two prizes for essays on library subjects, preferably connected with Wales, similar to the following: "Library extension work in Wales" or "The Library service in Wales: a survey." Essays should not exceed 3,000 words in length, and should be submitted bearing a *nom-de-plume* to the Hon. Sec. by 31st January, 1932.

ELLIS SELICK,

*Hon. Secretary.*

## New Members

**E**DITH E. BROOKES, Thomas F. C. Lucas, Stanley G. Saunders, Dorothy Sparrow (Willesden); Marjorie F. Davey (Times Book Club, Reading); H. Turner-Evans (Denbighshire County, Ruthin); Charles Gunkel (Poplar); Leslie F. Hasker, Walter J. Lowles (St. Marylebone); Winifred M. Heard (Fulham); Daisy Heffer (Islington); E. W. Hough (Oxford); Gladys E. Keightley, Ella Reynolds (Lincoln); Kenneth J. Ling (Bromley, Kent); Rose L. McQuinn, Leonard H. Meek, Leonard Read (Paddington); Frank E. T. Rainbow, Francis Swindell (Woolwich); Raymond R. Samuel (Stoke Newington); Constance M. Stern (Croydon); George W. Wiggs, Arthur W. C. Wright (Dagenham).

*East Anglian Division.*—John Brosche, Thomas N. E. Smith (Norwich); Eileen M. Clarke, Iris A. C. Gale, Barbara Grieve (Lowestoft).

*Midland Division.*—Mary Else, Audrey Nicholson, Margaret Painton (Derbyshire County).

*North-Eastern Division.*—Florence B. Cockcroft, Gladys I. Wood (Blyth); Edna M. McCulloch (Darlington).

*North-Western Division.*—Miss F. Bishop, E. B. Irving, Miss M. Knight, J. C. Marl (Wallasey); Miss P. Burrows, Miss I. A. Green, S. Hall, J. C.

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## Our Library

*Small municipal libraries: a manual of modern method (pp. 129, cloth). The Library Association, 1s.*

**A**LTHOUGH it appears that this book has been issued mainly for the benefit of members of local library authorities, it contains much that may be read with profit by librarians and assistants. It should prove invaluable as propaganda, and as an aid to committee-men in arriving at a sane conception of the functions of a library system. At the same time, there are many of us who should find in it a new and stimulating treatment of perennial problems.

The chapters cover almost every phase of librarianship that is likely to concern the librarian of a small library, and, since they are the work of a committee which has had wide experience in the inspection and renovation of obsolete systems, the advice contained in some of them is diametrically opposed to many of the textbook shibboleths. The essay on stock is particularly good, although some of the suggestions made in it are definitely heretical. Standard books in seven volumes are, for instance, treated with a firm hand. Factors for the collection of stock are described as useless to anybody but an examinee. It is suggested that books should be bought

because the librarian is definitely of the opinion that they will be read. While this particular chapter is, in my opinion, the cream of the book, the remaining essays are of high standard, full of sound common sense, and eminently readable.

T. E. C.

**CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.**—Students wishing to enter for the full Correspondence Courses are reminded that all forms of application, with fees, must reach Mr. S. W. Martin, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24, not later than 10th October, *after which date applications cannot be considered.* Particulars of these Courses will be found in the July LIBRARY ASSISTANT.

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**J** D. REYNOLDS, Assistant Cataloguer, Leeds Public Libraries, to be Assistant Librarian, Dewsbury Public Libraries. Six L.A. Certificates.

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